114 today; if it provides ethnography with new materials; if it makes the native better known to missionaries, administrators, officers, colonists, and merchants, and thus better understood; and if cordial relations between the native and ourselves are thereby facilitated. Railroads will soon open up and profoundly modify the country. While there is still time, let us hasten to record the mentality of this people in its primitive form. We were able to gather data which we believe reflect the truth quite closely, thanks to the circumstances of our stay in Mossi country: ten consecutive years among its people, of which seven were spent in Koupéla; a knowledge of the language sufficient to maintain a running conversation on any subject whatever with the natives; and the close contact into which our ministry brought us with the village inhabitants. We shall be the first to acknowledge, however, that errors may have crept in here and there. It is very difficult to obtain a precise piece of information, and several natives questioned on the same subject often gave different answers. We were forced to make choices, and although we always tended to adopt the story which appeared to offer the greatest number of safeguards, we may have been wrong at times.

It must not be forgotten that our goal is not to provide a complete record of Mossi manners and customs. This was not possible, it would have been onerous, and we did not feel that it was necessary in order to present what we consider to be a generally accurate over-all picture of these people. Truthfulness compels us to point out that these materials were gathered for the most part in the province of Koupéla and, therefore, bear the impress of that locality. Our fellow-workers in Ouagadougou were kind enough to provide us with some information, but we were unable to obtain any data on the Yatenga region. God permitting, we shall round out these notes in a more comprehensive work.

101 Before we broach our subject, one remark is in order. It has be-
104 come usual to speak of the Mossi, of a Mossi, of the Mossi language, as though the word did not vary. We shall follow this custom and always write "Mossi" in the singular and in the plural, although the true name of this people is Moara, plural Mosé. Likewise, we have spelled geographical names in accordance with the practice of the Administration, so as to avoid the appearance of wishing to reform everything.

000 May we thank here all those from far and near who have helped us with this work, and especially those who have contributed the interesting photographs that illustrate it.

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
FA28 Mossi FA28

PETER B. HAMMOND

13. *Economic Change and Mossi Acculturation*

Some five thousand Mossi from the kingdom of Yatenga in the Upper Volta have been resettled on the newly developed lands of the Niger Irrigation Project in the French Sudan. Removed from a cultural setting which has been relatively undisturbed by the influence of European civilization, they are required to adapt themselves rapidly to an economic situation structured and directed by Europeans. Economic organization being the variable involved, a study of their adjustment provides an opportunity to examine some of the cultural problems and processes related to economic development in underdeveloped areas.

Yatenga is the northernmost of four Mossi kingdoms located in the Upper Volta. It is a sub-Saharan savanna land of red earth, low rainfall, gently rolling plains, and low hills. Ouahigouya, the capital, gives its name to the French administrative unit, the Cercle de Ouahigouya, which has governed the kingdom from its headquarters in this ancient city since its conquest in 1895.[1]

To distinguish themselves from the people of the neighboring kingdoms of Ouagadougou, Fada-N'Gourma, and Tenkodogo, the Mossi of the Yatenga sometimes speak of themselves as "Yadise" (those of Yadiga). This name refers to the fact that they regard themselves as being descended, as a nation, from Naba Yadiga, the half-mythical warrior-prince from Oaugadougou who broke away from his father's dynasty to form the separate political entity, Yatenga, which bears his name (*ya* for "Yadiga" and *tenga* for "country"). The Mossi have not always been numerically and culturally dominant in the Yatenga, as they are today. They recognize that their ancestors came from the south, from Mamprusi and Dagomba in the northern territories of Ghana.

Highly organized politico-religious states representing the cultural amalgamation of native and foreign populations and institutions are characteristic of the Voltaic region of West Africa. Acknowledging that we "owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes are

[1] Capitaine Noire, *Monographie du Cercle de Ouahigouya* (Ouahigouya, 1904), p. 15.

/451/ Book Four

Black Warriors and Conquerors

Chapter I

The Mossi -- Occupations

101 131 The Mossi are settled between the twelfth and fourteenth degrees of north latitude, and between the second and fifth degrees of west longitude. To the south, they extend slightly beyond the twelfth degree of latitude. They are indeed to be found in Saraboutenga, Rakaye, Béré, and Tenkodogo, but this does not bring them too far south of the twelfth degree. To the north, on the other hand, they do not quite reach the fourteenth degree.

161 563 The Mossi form a rather large group which occupies, in the center of the area, the circle /an administrative division/ of Ouagadougou; to the northwest, the circle of Ouahigouya; to the southeast, the residency /administrative center/ of Tenkodogo; and to the east of the latter, the circle of Fada N'Gourma. Of course, the Mossi do not make up the total population of these four districts. In the Ouahigouya circle, there are the Habé /Habe/ and Houmbébé /Humbe/ to the northwest, and the Samoro /Samo/ to the south. In the Ouagadougou circle, which may be regarded as the center of Mossi territory, there are the Kipirsi to the east. In the Tenkodogo residency there are the Boussansé /Busansi/ to the south and in the circle of Fada N'Gourma the Gourmantché or Gourmanké /Gurma/ to the east. The Mossi, however, make up 161 the /452/ greater part of the total population in all four areas. In the circle of Ouagadougou, they number 750,000, in the residency of Tenkodogo, 122,000, in the residency of Leo, 1,000. This adds up to 873,000 for the circle of Ouagadougou as a whole. Assuming that there are 200,000 Mossi in the circles of Ouahigouya and Fada N'Gourma (a very approximate figure), a total of 1,073,000 Mossi is obtained. This makes them by far the most numerous group in all of French West Africa. The whole of our Dahomey, for example,

10:Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1964 FA28 Mossi FA28
Yatenga

vented by the "playful antagonism of teasing," and he argued that the regular repetition of joking serves as a reminder of the social "disjunction" of the relation, while "conjunction" is simultaneously maintained by friendliness.

Such an analysis is insightful but inadequate. The social structural sources of the need for reliance on joking and the social and psychological processes which joking involves are more complex than Radcliffe-Brown recognized. More occurs in joking than the symbolic reification of "separateness" and the concurrent assertion of intergroup amity.

The Structural Context of Joking

In support of this contention I would like first to consider the characteristics of the structural contexts in which joking tends to be institutionalized. For it is from the nature of certain social structural situations that joking derives its reason for being.

I suggest that wherever joking is institutionalized, the relations between the participants will tend to be characterized by five interrelated factors:

(1) *separation:* either social or spatial or both;
(2) *reciprocity:* a traditionally sanctioned exchange of economic, social, or ceremonial goods and/or services;
(3) *ambivalence:* an equivocal mélange of amity and hostility;
(4) *equality:* analogous individual or group status;
(5) *independence:* the absence of relevant allegiance to a single authority.

Obviously the comparative weight of these several factors will vary with the relationships of which they are a part. Where, for example, spatial separation is great, and/or the reciprocal tie is weak, joking is likely to be mild. Where ambivalence is strong, joking may be relied on more frequently and may be more hostile in content. Where the status of the participants is unequal, joking may tend to be asymmetrical. And so on.

I further suggest that as an adjustive mechanism joking derives its significance from the manner in which it provides concurrently for the operation of three interrelated but analytically separable processes: communication, control, and catharsis. These will be considered later.

Joking Among the Mossi

The points in the argument just outlined may be illustrated by a brief discussion of the varieties of joking found among the Mossi living in Yatenga, an indigenous kingdom in the Voltaic Republic of West Africa. Among the Mossi, joking is institutionalized as an adjustive mechanism in the following relationships: (1) between Ego and his mother's agnatic kin, particularly his mother's elder brother; (2) between Ego and his mother's brother's wife; (3) between siblings-in-law; (4) between sibs; (5) between age-sets in the same age-grade; (6) between certain villages; and (7) be-

10:Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1964 FA28 Mossi FA28
Yatenga

ship itself and the contract of interlineage co-operation and solidarity which every marriage serves to establish or reinforce.[4]

Although this joking interchange is seen in its full implications when there is an immediate source of dissension between marriage partners, it may also occur in the absence of any specific difficulty. Then it is apparently indulged in simply because it is expected, and for the pleasure which the Mossi, like all people, derive from an occasion to exercise their wit. It is this relatively disinterested joking which has been most frequently described in the literature, and this may account for the failure of many scholars to perceive more fully the important social and psychological functions which joking may fulfill.

Conclusion

This paper has been written as a tentative step toward a reformulation of the various and disparate observations on joking contained in the anthropological literature. I have contended that an analysis of this literature indicates that wherever joking is institutionalized the structural relationship between the participants tends to be characterized by five significantly interrelated structural attributes: separation, reciprocity, ambivalence, equality, and independence. I have also indicated that such joking may serve as an adjustive mechanism by providing for the concurrent maintenance of communication, control, and the culturally harmless catharsis of potentially disruptive emotions.

A variety of forms of institutionalized joking found among the Mossi of Yatenga have been cited to illustrate these points. However, I suggest that the factors which cluster with this reliance on joking as an adjustive mechanism are not unique to the Mossi. Institutionalized joking reported for other parts of Africa appears to be structurally and processually similar.

NOTES

1. A shorter version of this paper was read at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association held in San Francisco in November, 1963. It is based on field research conducted among the Mossi from 1954 to 1956 with the assistance of a Ford Foundation Fellowship.

2. Marriage between the members of descent groups united by a joking alliance is regarded by the Mossi as highly desirable, apparently in recognition of the useful role of joking as an adjustive mechanism. Once such a marriage is contracted, however, Ego and his wife must take care that their joking insults are directed only at the younger kinsmen of the other and that the insulting remarks are personal. It would, for example, be acceptable for Ego to call his wife's younger sister a disreputable shrew but dangerous to call her a slave (a term of disrespect used frequently in joking between sibs). To refer to her as a slave would cast unflattering aspersions on her entire kin group, including her mother and father, with whom, in their new status as parents-in-law, Ego may no longer joke.

3. I believe that joking is also institutionalized between the Mossi and the Yarse, a highly acculturated ethnic minority of Mande origin who live throughout Yatenga. There is also joking between the Mossi and the indigenous blacksmith caste. Unfortunately my data on these two instances of joking are inadequate.

121 [174] functioning of early Sudanese societies. It will also attempt to demonstrate how European conquest affected the political organization of the Mossi and contributed to its ultimate decline.

The kingdom of Ouagadougou was selected as the main object of study, primarily because it emerged as the most important Mossi polity and retained this position through the greater part of Mossi history. Attention will be given to the other Mossi polities and the three other Mossi kingdoms—Yatenga, Tenkodogo, and the more remote Fada-N'Gourma, all of which resemble Ouagadougou—only insofar as they affect the history of Ouagadougou or highlight the basic nature of Mossi government.

101 161 The Mossi are a Sudanese Negroid population in the new Republic of the Upper Volta.[2] They number about 2,200,000, or approximately half of the country's total population. Their ancestral territory, which they call 131 *Mogho* (land of the Mossi), covers some 30,000 square miles in the southern 133 part of the Republic. It is a huge plateau, lying from 1,000 to 1,600 feet above sea level, and broken by three low mountain ranges and numerous small hills. The Kipirsi range in the northeast has an average height of about 2,000 feet and includes the sacred mountain of the Mossi, known as Plimpikou. The Boussouma range to the east reaches a height of some 1,500 feet, and the Naouri range in the southeast is almost as high.

132 The climate of Mossi country is typical of the Sudanic zone. There are two main seasons, one cold and dry, the other hot and wet. The first begins in November with the coming of the harmattan and ends in January, the coolest month, when the average temperature is about 70° F. and the humidity about 12 per cent. The hot season extends from March to October. In July, the warmest month, the temperature reaches a high of 88° F. and the humidity 78 per cent. Violent dust storms herald the rains, which begin late in May and end in September. The rain falls almost entirely in heavy showers and thunderstorms, and the average annual fall is between 30 and 40 inches. In those years when the rainfall is about 40 inches and is regularly spaced, the Mossi can look forward to a good harvest. When the rainfall is below 30 inches and is spaced irregularly during the planting season, the threat of famine is serious. So narrow is the margin of rainfall for agriculture that in 1956 the people of one Mossi district anxiously awaited "two rains" (two showers), without which they feared that in 1957 there would be a difficult "hungry period" (the time between the exhaustion of one year's crops and the maturing of the next).

133 Mossi country is drained by only three rivers: the Black Volta with its two chief tributaries, the Sourou and the Debere, and the Red and White Voltas with their numerous small tributaries. Only the Black Volta flows

The Mossi grow tobacco in fields around their
248 4 INTRODUCTION
249 homesteads, where they also cultivate their most important cash crops, cotton and indigo, which are used in the manufacture and dyeing of cotton cloth.

136 The wild fauna of Mossi country include several species of antelope, deer, monkeys, rabbits, snakes, and wild pigs. Elephants roam the beds of rivers and streams and often destroy cultivated fields, while lions and hyenas distress the people by attacking livestock. The pools and rivers of Mossi country are inhabited by turtles, crocodiles, and various species of scaled and scaleless fish. Chickens, muscovy ducks, and half-domesticated guinea fowl are the most valuable species of birds.

231 The Mossi have long been famous for their splendid donkeys and
[492] horses. Donkeys are sometimes ridden, but they are used primarily as
[439] beasts of burden. Horses are important for military and ceremonial purposes and for export to the tsetse-fly zones to the south. The Mossi raise two main types of cattle: a zebu-like animal in the northern regions and a
[439] dwarf variety in the south. These animals are raised primarily for their milk and for export, and are seldom killed for meat until they are fairly old.
[771] Goats and sheep provide the main source of meat. Hog-raising is not wide-
[178] spread, and seems to be declining in importance with the increased observance of Islamic food taboos, which is on the uprise even among people who are still pagans.

135 The subsoil of Mossi country is not well known, but so far there have been no major discoveries of mineral deposits. The only known gold field
[301] remained unworked in aboriginal times. The Mossi do not like to wear
[325] gold ornaments, preferring jewelry worked from imported copper and
[439] silver. The northern Mossi worked their local iron in aboriginal times, but those in the south obtained this metal from caravan traders.

175 The nineteenth-century reports of Barth and other European travelers
439 indicate that the Mossi conducted a rather extensive foreign trade. At least
[443] six caravan routes passed through their territory, and traders such as the Hausa and Mandingo visited the important Mossi trading centers at Yako, Pouitenga, and Ouagadougou, where they exchanged Saharan and forest products for Mossi livestock and cloth.[8]

101 The Mossi belong to the Voltaic culture area, a name given by Delafosse to the regions drained by the Black, Red, and White Voltas and their tributaries. The area embraces parts of Mali, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, the Upper Volta, and northern Ghana.[4] It includes a vast congeries of peoples such
[197] as the Dagomba, Mamprusi, Dagari, Birifo, Senufo, Gurmanche, Gurunsi, Lobi, Bobo, Tallensi, Konkomba, Dogon, Somba, Fulse, and Ninisi, all of whom speak languages belonging to the Gur or Moshi-Grunshi group of

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

the Niger-Congo family of African languages.[5] Like the Mossi, these groups are primarily horticultural; cereals are their main crops, and they cultivate yams where conditions permit. Their social organization takes both patrilineal and matrilineal forms. The veneration of ancestors lies at the core of their religious beliefs, but the existence of an otiose high god whose name contains the root *We* (*Ouennam, Win, Wene*, etc.) is also recognized. There are also tutelary spirits, the chief one being a female earth deity associated with We and called *Tenga* (also occurring as *Teng, Tena*, and *Ten*). The *Tengsobadamba*, who are priests or custodians of the earth shrines, are found among all the groups in the Voltaic family, and they often share leadership with more secular chiefs called *Naba, Na*, or *Nab*. Most of the ruling clans of the Voltaic groups claim common ancestry and acknowledge the same totems.[6]

The only glaring dissimilarity between these Voltaic peoples, and the one with which this study is primarily concerned, lies in the realm of political organization. Some are united into large kingdoms, while others form small acephalous groups. Delafosse makes the following generalizations about the smaller groups:

> It may be said of these people that, as a whole, they have remained quite primitive. With a few exceptions, they have not reached any significant level of political development; as a rule, they have not progressed beyond family unity. Although they neighbor on well-organized and powerful states such as the Mossi empires and the kingdoms of the Gourma and Bergo, which are inhabited by populations of the same ethnic group, they have derived little benefit from this proximity; some of them have been absorbed as subjects or vassals by these states, while others have remained on the outside, and seem to have but one purpose, the forceful preservation of their fierce but sterile independence. . . . Attachment to the land seems to be the only solid and fecund institution in their chaotic society.[7]

Rattray believes that the development of such highly organized political systems as those of the Mossi, Dagomba, and Mamprusi may be traced to "small bands of strangers." He thinks that the outsiders were better armed, better clothed, and familiar with the rudiments of Islam, and that since they knew about the institution of kingship, they were able to "superimpose upon the primitive tribes among whom they settled a new and unheard-of political conception, namely the idea of territorial and secular leadership in place of the immemorial institution of a ruler who was the high priest of a totemic clan and dealt only in spiritual sanctions." Nevertheless, Rattray is not certain that the Voltaic groups would not have evolved complex political systems if they had been left to themselves. He makes the significant statement that if the subjugation by the bands of strangers had not

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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The Mossi were probably brought to the attention of modern Europe by T. E. Bowdich, an Englishman who went to Ashanti in 1817 to sign a trade agreement with the Asantehene. While at Kumasi, Bowdich diligently sought information about the lands in the interior, but was relatively unsuccessful because his hosts pleaded ignorance. Nevertheless, he did find out that "five journies [days] from Yngwa [Yendi] is Mosee, a warlike but less visited kingdom: it consists of many states, but the superior monarch is named Billa, and the capital Kookoopella."[4] This misinformation is interesting because it shows that Bowdich's respondent had precise information only about Koupela, a town located near the great caravan center of Poitenga. Similarly, the linguistic data reported by Bowdich are for Dagomba rather than Mossi.

Another Englishman, Joseph Dupuis, led a trade mission to Kumasi in 1819, and obtained data on the Mossi that are surprisingly accurate given the reluctance of middlemen traders to reveal commercial information. He reports that Ashanti traders "sometimes travel as far as Aughoa, the Magho, and to the east of Kasogho. Aughoa is distant from Coomassie twenty-five journies by the Salgha and Yandy Roads, which would give a distance of 360 British miles. Their object in frequenting this place is to collect that vegetable substance by the name of shea butter."[5] There is no doubt that "Aughoa" is really "Ouagha," the term often used by the Mossi to refer to their capital, and the distance between Kumasi and Ouagadougou as reported by Dupuis is approximately the same as the road mileage today. The name "Magho," which appears from time to time in these early documents, seems to be none other than "Mogho," the traditional name of Mossi country. "Kasogho" probably refers to the section of Ouagadougou that was controlled by the Kamsaogho Naba.

The Hausa merchants knew a great deal about the Mossi and the resources of their territory, but only with difficulty did the English trader Hugh Clapperton persuade Sultan Mohammed Bello of Sokoto to give him the following information:

> The country of Mouchier or Mouchi is situated to the west of Ghurma. It is vast and possesses a gold mine, rivers, forests, and mountains. It is inhabited by tribes of the Sudan who possess many fast horses and large donkeys. Their king is called Wagadougou; their asses are sent down to the Gondja to carry the drums of the Army.[6]

Either Clapperton or his informant obviously confused the capital of the Mossi with their king, and included parts of Dagomba in their territory. Barth, who traveled extensively in the Sudan between 1849 and 1855, did

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

not enter Mossi territory. Nevertheless, he obtained rather precise information on the important caravan routes leading from Timbuktu through the Mossi trade centers of Ouagadougou, Kaya, Yako, and Koupela, down to Salaga and other towns in Ghana, and even across to Sansane Mango in Togoland. His data on the Mossi are invaluable:

> The whole triangle interposed between the Niger toward the north, and the country of the Eastern Mandingoes or Wangarawa toward the south, appears to be inhabited by a single race of people whose language, although they are divided into several states and nations, nevertheless appears originally to have been the same stock. It is very probable that this race in ancient times occupied the whole upper course of the Niger, and that this tract may have been wrested from it in later times by the Songhai and the Mandingoes, especially that section of the latter which is generally called Bambara. These are the Gourma toward the N.E., the Tombo toward the N.W., and between them the Mossi. . . . The strongest among these pagan kingdoms five centuries ago, and even at the present moment, is that of the Mossi, although the country is split into a number of small principalities, almost totally independent of each other, and paying only some slight homage to the ruler of the principality of Woghodogo.[7]

Europe learned more about the Mossi from Sigismund Koelle, who visited Sierra Leone in 1854. His informant was one Andrew Dixon, who had lived in Koupela before being captured and sold into slavery. He furnished information on the location of the Mossi, their wars with the Busansi, and their important commercial and political relations with the Ashanti.[8] Koelle's report, taken in conjunction with the reports of Dupuis, Bowdich, Clapperton, and Barth, shows that the Ashanti, like the Hausa and other coastal peoples, were protecting their trade when they attempted to isolate the peoples of the interior from the Europeans. But as soon as the British defeated the Ashanti in the war of 1873–74, the Sudan was opened and adventurers poured in. In 1877 and 1878, two missionaries of the Basel Mission visited the northern regions of Ghana, and subsequently gave a good description of Mossi commerce in that area.[9] Lonsdale, who visited Salaga in 1881, found among the traders in the market "the Mossi with his cattle, sheep, and slaves—these latter, generally Gurunsi, are not exposed for sale in the street or market, but can be seen where the owner resides."[10]

The activities of the various European nations in West Africa and other regions at this time led to military and diplomatic difficulties, which the Berlin Conference of 1884–85 was convened to resolve. Agreement was reached to assign "spheres of influence" to the various European nations, to regulate trade, and to provide for arbitration between rival claimants of conquered or "protected" territories. In West Africa, this meant the end

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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8. Cf. Marc, p. 156. 9. Cf. Fortes, pp. 258–71. 64-0
10. Skinner, "The Diffusion of Islam," pp. 659–69.
11. Tauxier, *Le Noir du Soudan*, pp. 585–86.
12. Dim Delobson, p. 205. 13. Crozat, p. 4820.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 4822. 15. *Ibid.*, p. 4835.
16. Binger, I, 452. 17. *Ibid.*, p. 456.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 452–56.
19. Archives, Document 15G-190 (1897–98). Instructions left to Captain Scal by Destenave, June 1897.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Marc, p. 27.
2. Barth, III, 595. Although it is possible that the Wolof prince Bemoy did hear [114] about the Mossi, he was mistaken about the name of their ruler. Interestingly enough, the title "Ogane" is not too dissimilar from Hogon, the title of head men among the [174] Dogon (Habe or Kado) whom the Mossi had pushed into the hills of Bandiagara. Bascom, p. 24.
3. Barth, III, 606. 4. Bowdich, p. 180.
5. Dupuis, Appendix CVII. 6. Clapperton, II, 323.
7. Barth, III, 643–49. As cited earlier, Barth states that the Portuguese got reports about the Mossi in the year 1533 "from the wrong side, namely from Benin." This may not have been altogether "the wrong side," however, for Barth gives us data on caravans from Mossi country to Sansane Mango in Togoland that indicate how news about the Mossi might have traveled from the interior to Benin city in Nigeria.
8. Koelle, p. 6. Dixon, who seems to have been one of the few captured Mossi sold to the West, reports: "Mose is west of Gurma, east of Andemtenga, where a different [131] language is spoken. Mose is also two days journey from Butmera, where the same [101] language is spoken; four days from Bulega [Bolga tanga], the language still the same, [197] and confederate with Kambonse, i.e. Asante; two days from Yaongo, with still the same language; six days from Bosanse which is at enmity with Mose and where people [484] bore their lips, and often tie them together with grass, and whose language is different from Mose; four days from Busma also a different language, and in which country there is a very high mountain (Tanga) from which those who ascend never come back again [probably a reference to Plimpikou, the Mossi holy mountain]; three or four weeks from Kambonse, i.e. Asante. Kupeala is four days from Wardyga [Ouagadougou] the Mossi capital, whither the king of Asante often sent presents; and one month from Salak [Salaga], an Asante town, where they bring kola nuts."
9. Marc, p. 30.
10. Great Britain, Parliamentary papers xlvi, 1882.
11. The people of Nobere, Manga, and other districts surrounding Bere have traditions about Krause, who is remembered as the first white-skinned person ever [826] seen in those parts. The color of his skin was attributed to the fact that, "like the fish," he had come out of the sea.
12. Krause, pp. 92 ff. Although there is no evidence to this effect in the literature, it appears certain that Mossi government officials knew of Krause's visit. They treated [574] most travelers in the following manner: "After entering a town the party is given in charge of a man usually termed 'housemaster.' It is his duty to exercise surveillance over the action of the stranger and to report the result to the authorities. . . . The trader conducts his business through his 'housemaster,' who usually makes a handsome gain by acting as middleman (G. E. Ferguson, quoted in Wolfson, p. 199).

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
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long been famous. The former are sometimes ridden but are used primarily as beasts of burden. Horses were and are still important for military and ceremonial purposes and for external trade to other areas.

The Mossi have never excelled in metalworking. The people in the northern part of the country have worked indigenous ores since aboriginal times. Those in the south get iron mainly from traders and caravans. The other metals which the Mossi smiths manufacture into tools and ornaments are also obtained from traders.

TRADE IN HISTORICAL TIMES

The geographic position of Mossi country has much to do with its being an important trade and market center. The country itself has always produced grain, cotton and livestock for export. And for several centuries caravans have passed through this region carrying Sudanese and Saharan products to the forest zones to the south, and carrying forest products back to the arid north. The beginning of this trade is lost in the dim past, but it safe to say that it developed shortly after or along with the founding of Timbuktu about 1100 A.D. The Mossi themselves were not definitely linked to this important *entrepot* until they raided it in 1328, but we can assume that they had been trading there for some time before that event took place. Similarly, we have no record of when the Mossi began trading with the forest zones, but we can also assume that this trade began around the same period or even before.

Our first evidence of Mossi trade and commerce comes from Europeans who were themselves interested in conducting their own trading activities with the peoples in the Bend of the Niger. Bowditch, an Englishman who had journeyed to Ashanti to sign a treaty facilitating the reopening of a profitable trade with the coast, wangled the first important piece of information about the Mossi from his reluctant hosts:

> Five journies from Yngwa is Mosee, a more warlike but less visited kingdom: it consists of many states, but the superior monarch is named Billa, and the capital Kookoopella. I place it to the N.W. because its merchants pass by Yngwa; they do not cross the Karhalla [White Volta] nor any river which is not fordable. (Bowditch 1819 : 180)

This information is not strictly correct since Koupela was not the capital of any of the Mossi kingdoms, but Bowditch's informant had probably heard of Koupela because it was the largest political entity near the large caravan center at Pouitenga.

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
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175 437 Dupuis, who replaced Bowditch in Kumasi in 1817, obtained surprisingly good data on trade relations between the Ashanti and the Mossi, considering the reluctance of the middlemen traders to furnish any help in this matter. He discovered that Ashanti traders

[103] . . . sometimes travel as far as Aughoa, the Magho, and to the east of Kasogho. Aughoa is distant from Coomassie twenty-five journies by the Salgha and Yandy Roads, which would give a distance of three hundred that vegetable substance . . . by the name of Shea butter. (Dupuis 1824 : App. cvii)[1]

The Hausa merchants and caravaneers knew a great deal about the Mossi and their resources, but it was only with great difficulty that Clapperton persuaded Sultan Mohammed Bello of Sokoto to give him the following information:

[101] The country of Mouchier or Mouchi is situated to the west of Ghurma. It is vast and possesses a gold mine, rivers, forests and mountains. It is inhabited by tribes of the Sudan who possess many fast horses, and large donkeys. Their king is called Wagadougou; their asses are sent down to the Gondja to carry the drums of the army. (Clapperton 1829 : 323)

It is obvious that either Clapperton or his informant confused the capital of the Mossi with their king, and included parts of Ghana in [23] their territory. Nevertheless, one does get an indication of the importance of livestock in Mossi trading.

The great bulk of the trade between the Mossi and their neighbors to the north and to the south was done through the medium of 175 caravans which crisscrossed their territory. The first person to signal 437 the existence of these caravans was Barth (1859 : III, 646–648) who, 487 although he did not enter Mossi country during his extensive travels in the Sudan from 1849 to 1855, reported the existence of several caravan routes which traversed the Mossi from the desert to the [103] forest. The first route he described proceeded from "Kirotashi, a town on the east side of the Niger, one day south of Say, to Woghodogho." [366] Ten days out of Kirotashi caravans usually reached Tengkodogo, and on the thirteenth day they arrived at Koupela which according to

[631] (1) The Aughoa referred to here is really "Wagha," the term often used by the Mossi when talking about their capital, Waghadougou. Magho is really "Mogho" the name of Mossi country itself, and Kasoagho is the name of a province of Wagadougou commanded by a minister of the Moro Naba, the Kasoagho Naba. Dupuis' report on the actual distance between Kumasis and Waghadougou is almost the same mileage as that [366] of today. Koelle (1854 : 6) received a report from a slave liberated in Sierra Leone in [648] 1854 that the great Mossi trading center "Kupeala is four days from Wardugu, the Mossi capital, whither the king of Asante often sends presents; and one month from Salak (Salaga), an Asante town, where they bring their cola-nuts."